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## LITERARY NOTES.

### TENNIS THE UNIVERSAL GAME.

CERTAINLY of them all tennis is the most universal; small boys, girls, women, men of three generations play it, and the crack has not very much more enjoyment out of it than the duffer. So long as a player feels within him possibilities of growth, he enjoys the game; and even when these fail, even when he realizes that he is slipping backward, he clings on, light-heartedly contesting every inch of the decline with someone of his contemporaries. "If I cannot keep pace with the advancing batallion, I shall not head those who are in retreat," cries your optimist; and so—because tennis players are generally optimists—you will see on any warm summer day veterans urging their old limbs upon the grassy courts, crouching in their play with racket held stiffly, trotting with little, timorous steps, poking at the ball with the gesture of uncertain vision; and you watch them awhile and think perhaps in the pride of your youth: "There can't be much fun in that." And then, while you are looking on, they begin to wrangle about some point; they are suspicious as to whether or not that ball actually did strike the line; and such verbal vitality as those four old men will then display, congregating at the net, wagging their heads, and finally examining the ball itself for traces of whitewash! You do not doubt any longer that their tennis is something of extreme moment to them; and you wonder if with your own occasional slipshod indifference to your rights on doubtful points you do not show an unworthy slight regard for a noble game.—ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER, in the August *Atlantic*.

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## NOTES

MESSRS HENRY HOLT & Co. announce that Kerner & Oliver's *Natural History of Plants* will no longer be published in four parts, but that in future it will be issued in a lower-priced edition in two volumes. The new edition will lack only the colored illustrations of the former more expensive one, which were inserted mainly for embellishment, but retains all the other illustrations, which were an essential part of the work.

Oh, Mary had a little mat  
Of raffia to sew.  
And everywhere that Mary went  
That mat was sure to go.

It followed her at home, at school ;  
Hung by her side at meals ;  
"Oh, mother, help me splice this on,  
Nor mind my stocking heels."

And Johnny had a basket, too,  
Of strong rattan to braid !  
It kept him from all household tasks,  
'Twas neath his pillow laid.

Now, everybody has a loom,  
Designed by brainy man,  
To weave with rags a beauteous rug  
Of most artistic plan.

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As a text-book the work is unique in that, while it is adapted to the most advanced students, it can be by the elimination of paragraphs designated by the author, be used for young classes without losing continuity or force.—*Chicago Tribune*.

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It is a book of power and movement, apart from its professional value and its admirable arrangement.—*Boston Evening Transcript*.

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And when the teacher, quite worn out,  
Goes home, what doth appear  
But rugs and baskets strewn about  
For her to finish here?

"Why doesn't Johnny learn to spell?"

The anxious mothers cry.

"Because we cannot weave it in,"

The teachers do reply.

—N. P. C., in *Linden Hill News*.

THE publication by Ginn & Co. of *Wood Folk at School*, a volume of nature-study by William J. Long, condensed from his *School of the Woods*, calls renewed attention to the recent attack made by John Burroughs upon the veracity of his younger rival. Now that the smoke of conflict has cleared away, it is manifest that Mr. Long has been a keen observer and a truthful recorder, and that Mr. Burroughs passed the bounds of courtesy and true criticism in denouncing the writings of a younger man simply because they contained the record of facts and impressions which had never come to his personal knowledge. In his *Wood Folk at School* Mr. Long assures us of his truth and exact observation, and he writes with a power which convinces the student that he may rely upon both his facts and his inferences. We have already warmly commended his *School of the Woods*, and the same praise may be given to it in its briefer form. The illustrations are the work of Charles Copeland, and the book forms the fourth volume in the "Wood Folk" series.—*Boston Transcript*.

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THE MACMILLAN CO. has published a volume on *American Railways*. This is a reprint, considerably amplified, of a series of articles that have appeared in the London *Times* from the pen of its special commissioner, Mr. Edwin A. Pratt. The *Times* sent Mr. Pratt to this country to make an investigation of the subject of our railroads. The volume, which runs to a little over three hundred pages, is likely to have some importance on account of the author's knowledge of his theme, and also on account of the special advantage a book of this sort has when written by the pen of a student who looks upon the subject from the outside.

PROFESSOR JOHN B. MCMASTER is the author of three of the most important chapters in the seventh volume of *The Cambridge Modern History*, the one devoted to *The United States*. Those are the ones dealing with "The Struggle for Commercial Independence (1783-1812)," "The Growth of the Nation (1815-1828," and "Commerce, Expansion, and Slavery (1828-1850)." Professor McMaster's specialty has been the growth of the United States and the life of its people since the close of the Revolution, and Americans will be gratified to learn that the account of the building of the country for this important work has been intrusted to so capable an authority and so delightful a writer. Save for the account of the War of 1812, Professor McMaster tells the whole story of the United States from the Revolution to ten years before the Civil War, and he tells it, as might be expected, with an abundance of picturesque detail. The fact is of consequence because this history represents what Europe will think of us for the next quarter-century.

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